



DEVELOPING TOGETHER

SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

Language, a Strength Based Approach and Assessment Skills

Teaching activity ideas for social work students

These activities focus on developing the student's assessment skills. They focus on using appropriate language, applying a strength based approach to assessment and application of the Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria to the assessment.

It is useful to undertake these activities once a student has undertaken an assessment themselves, or at least shadowed two or more social workers gathering information for an assessment. It is particularly useful if the student has been observed undertaking an assessment, as these activities can be used to reflect on their practice during the observation.

These activities should take place in a supervision session, and require some preparation by the Practice Educator. Each activity can be used on its own, or in combination with one or both of the others.

Activity 1: Using appropriate language

Aim: To explore the use of language and the impact this can have on the service user.

- a) The Practice Educator will need to find two assessments, written using different styles.
- b) The Practice Educator then needs to pick out some different phrases in both assessments and ask the student to read these prior to supervision.
- c) In Supervision the Practice Educator asks the student about the impact on both themselves and service users of the different words and phrases used in the assessments.
- d) <https://www.scopt.co.uk/archives/4966>
The Practice Educator reads the above article (or other literature/articles relating to the use of language in social work), and provides this to the student to read (before supervision).



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- e) The Practice Educator creates an exercise exploring words that are specific to their team. This could include having two columns with different ways of describing people and / or could include wording to questions which can be discussed - focusing on whether the wording is incorporating a strengths based approach, or are making assumptions or judgements etc?

Activity 2: Applying a strength based approach to assessment

Aim: To explore how the strength based approach can be applied whilst gathering information for an assessment

The Practice Educator will need to provide the student with some information about a strength based approach in assessment before supervision. The Practice Educator can use local guidance from their organisation, or any literature they have. Information from SCIE website (<https://www.scie.org.uk/strengths-based-approaches/guidance>) can be used, and is helpful.

In supervision, the Practice Educator can ask the student to explain their understanding of Strength Based theory, and how this can be applied in an assessment.

Then the Practice Educator can ask the student how they may ask questions differently (either from how they did this or from how the social workers they observed did this).

Activity 3: The Care Act Criteria

Aim: To improve understanding and application of the Care Act 2014 Eligibility Criteria

The Practice Educator will provide the student with information regarding the Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria before supervision. This is information they may have, or can provide a link to the SCIE website, which has well set out information about different aspects of the Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria, and the domains used in it.



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The two links below take you to the Eligibility criteria page, and the determination of eligibility page, however there are many tabs on the left hand side of the webpage that will inform students of differing aspects of eligibility.

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility/eligibility/criteria-adults-care.asp>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility/eligibility/eligibility-determination.asp>

In supervision the Practice Educator will ask the student to think about their assessment (or one that they have observed), and apply the eligibility to the case.

It may also be useful for the student to also think about how it may be different if their service user was a carer (or visa versa if they have assessed a carer) - in order to look at the differences in criteria for carers/service users.

These activities are based on teaching activities designed by Meera Padhiar